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ABSTRACT

To update previous reports about the education provided for homeless children, the National Law Center conducted a survey of providers of services for the homeless and of other advocates for the homeless. The 80 respondents represented 64 family shelter providers in 33 states. Nearly 79% of respondents reported that transportation is a barrier for homeless children who remain in the school they attended before becoming homeless, and 38% reported that residency requirements are a barrier that keeps children from their original schools. Difficulty in obtaining birth certificates and immunization requirements were barriers for enrollment of homeless children. A disturbing trend is the establishment of separate schools or classrooms for homeless children. A study of 40 such "schools" reveals that they are usually located in shelters or churches. They typically do not provide the same curricular and extracurricular activities as regular public schools, and they may not be staffed by certified teachers. They often group children into multiage, multigroup classes, and they may violate health and safety codes. The report contains recommendations to ensure the integration of homeless children into mainstream public schools. The survey is attached. (SLD)

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